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SUBJECT: CLAYMORE ATTACK ON CIVILIAN BUS

1. (SBU) On Thursday, June 15, 2006 the American Embassy received reports of a claymore mine attack on a civilian bus north east of Anuradhapura town in North Central Province. We have been advised that at approximately 0740 on June 15, 2006, a government operated civilian passenger bus traveling from Kebethigollewa (a remote village approximately 60 kilometers northeast of Anuradhapura) to Anuradhapura was attacked. The police advise that the bus was carrying approximately one hundred passengers and that at least 58 are confirmed dead and approximately 30 injured. Many of the casualties are thought to be children who were traveling to school.

2. (SBU) According to the Sri Lankan police, the Army had cleared the road traveled by the bus earlier in the morning. The bus was blown apart by two remotely detonated claymore mines. It is not known if the clearing teams missed the two claymores or if the perpetrators planted them after the team passed.

3. (SBU) The perpetrators of this attack have not been identified but are believed to be LTTE. The area in which the explosion occurred has a strong GSL presence but the LTTE operates there as well. Mission policy prohibits travel by USG employees to this area unless they have permission from the DCM. No Mission employees are in the area and we are unaware of any American citizens who reside in the area or who were involved in the attack.

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